

VZCZCXYZ0017
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEG #0721/01 1181451
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 281451Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2293

UNCLAS CAIRO 000721

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA, G/TIP FOR YOUSEY, G/TIP FOR TAYLOR,
NEA/ELA FOR CHATTERJI

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PHUM KCRM KWMN KJUS EG

SUBJECT: EGYPT MAKING PROGRESS TO COUNTER TRAFFICKING IN
PERSONS (TIP)

REF: 08 CAIRO 2525

SENSITIVE, BUT UNCLASSIFIED. PLEASE HANDLE ACCORDINGLY

11. (SBU) Key Points:

-- Since the November 2008 visit of G/TIP Coordinator, Ambassador Mark Lagon to Egypt, the Government of Egypt (GOE) has continued to make progress to address trafficking in persons by beginning to implement the anti-trafficking amendments to the child law (reftel), opening its first rehabilitation center, and increasing public awareness on trafficking issues.

-- There are two cases currently in the Egyptian courts, which are using the anti-trafficking amendments to try perpetrators of trafficking crimes. The victims in one case have been turned over to other governmental bodies for protection, and provision of medical, pyschosocial and rehabilitation services.

-- Both the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) and the Public Prosecutor's office have trained people on how to use the new amendments in their work on TIP.

-- First Lady Suzanne Mubarak has played a leading role in raising public awareness of TIP both in Egypt and the Middle East region. Other governmental organizations such as NCCM and the National Council for Human Rights have carried out studies and seminars to raise awareness.

-- The GOE is drafting a comprehensive anti-trafficking law. The Egyptian National Commission for Combating TIP hopes the law will be presented to parliament during the fall 2009 session.

-- NCCM is working to address the issues of "forced and temporary marriages" and child sex tourism.

12. (SBU) Comment: Although Egypt still does not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act's (TVPA) minimum standards, it is making significant efforts to comply with the minimum standards. Both Prosecutor Hany Fathy Georgy and Dr. Azza El Ashmawy participated in the International Visitors Program in 2005. Both reference this training as the "watershed" event in helping them to understand TIP. They have both risen to leadership position with the Public Prosecutors Office and NCCM and are two of the Egyptian champions in combating TIP. First Lady Suzanne Mubarak's impact cannot be overstated, as her involvement signals the clear interest and support of the President. Although she is not officially part of the government, her status as First Lady gives her an informal political role and the ability to make significant political and social changes. More than one of our contact told us that because of her activism and efforts, officials at the Ministries of Interior and Justice

are now afraid to drag their feet on TIP issues. The Mission also urges graduating Egypt from the Watch List to Tier 2. Egypt has met the criteria as the number of trafficking victims is not significantly increasing, and the GOE made substantial efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons in 2008. Not to do so could undermine our credibility and the influence of those Egyptians who have been willing to work with us.

Implementing Child Law Amendments and Protecting Victims

¶13. (SBU) Hany Fathy Georgy, Senior Chief Prosecutor at the Public Prosecutor's told us that the Public Prosecutor's office has two cases using the child law amendments. In March, the Public Prosecutor's office began prosecuting a case in the Alexandria Criminal Court involving a gang that forced four young boys to participate in homosexual prostitution in exchange for money. The defendants are being charged under the new child law amendments and the prostitution law. Georgy also told us that the Public Prosecutor's office transferred the victims to the care of NCCM, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Social Solidarity to provide protection, medical treatment, as well as psychological and rehabilitation services. Also in March, Giza Security arrested the parents of three girls, and three men from the Gulf, after investigations revealed that the parents sold the girls, aged 12 and 13, for prostitution purposes in exchange for 3000 Egyptian pounds (USD 550) per week for each child. The five defendants were transferred to South Giza Prosecution. The parents were charged with trafficking under the child amendments and the Gulf men were

charged with sexual assault.

Training to Use the Anti-Trafficking Amendments

¶14. (SBU) Subsequent to the June 2008 passage of the new child law amendments that criminalize all forms of trafficking in children (reftel), NCCM conducted 10 capacity building training sessions with the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Tourism, Health, Religious Affairs, Manpower and the Public Prosecutor's Office to raise awareness of the amendments and help officials understand the crimes and sanctions under the new amendments. Over 370 government officials, including 45 judges and prosecutors, and 107 social workers in the Cairo, Giza and 6th of October Governorates, participated in the NCCM training sessions. Prosecutor General Abd El-Megeed Mahmoud told us on February 18 that the Public Prosecutor's Office issued a guidebook to train all judges and prosecutors on the effective and strict implementation of the anti-trafficking child amendments.

Opening the First Rehabilitation Center

¶15. (SBU) Dr. Azza El Ashmawy, Director of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood's (NCCM) TIP unit told us on March 29 that NCCM opened a rehabilitation center in January in the southern Cairo neighborhood of Dar el-Salaam to aid street children who had either been victimized by traffickers or were vulnerable to being trafficked. She told us that NCCM was working with the British NGO, FACE, and the French company, Danone (Dannon) to run the center. Both NCCM and FACE worked for one year to gain the trust of the street children. The center currently offers day services to 25 young boys, but has plans to offer residential services in the future. El Ashmawy told us that many of the boys at the center had been abused, were involved in forced begging, and committed petty crimes in order to survive on the streets of Cairo. She said that the center provides the boys with counseling services, medical care, lunch, and literacy and computer training. Danone funded the training of the center's social workers and provides a doctor for medical checkups.

NCCM also plans to open a rehabilitation center for at-risk girls in the near future. NCCM is also working to document the nature and magnitude of the street children problem in Egypt.

Increasing Awareness

¶6. (SBU) Egypt has taken steps to increase public awareness of TIP issues primarily through the voice of First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. Mrs. Mubarak plays a leading role in leading the fight against TIP. She is a key voice in the NCCM, which operates under the direction of her close friend, the Minister of Family and Population, Ambassador Moushira Khattab. In December, Mrs. Mubarak was a co-sponsor with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) at the Cairo launch of the Arabic version of the IOM's handbook on "Providing Direct Assistance to Victims of Trafficking." Suzanne Mubarak's Peace Movement has an international campaign called "&End Human Trafficking Now," and in March 2009 the movement helped to organize a regional conference in Bahrain called "Trafficking in Persons at the Crossroads." Dr. Nihal Fahmy, UNODC's former regional consultant on TIP told us on February 3 that as a direct result of Mrs. Mubarak's anti-TIP activities, there was a noticeable increase of Egyptian media coverage on trafficking issues in ¶2008.

¶7. (SBU) In November 2008, the National Council for Human Rights special seminar on trafficking which brought together officials from different sectors to address the problem and identify its magnitude. On March 29, NCCM's TIP unit presented us with a draft copy of a manual to raise awareness among parents and hospital workers of the dangers of selling and trafficking new-born infants. NCCM will follow up on the manual with training programs for nurses, doctors, and psycho-social specialists.

Status of Comprehensive Trafficking Law

¶8. (SBU) Hany Georgy told us on April 22 that the Egyptian National Commission for Combating TIP had one more session before it finished drafting the comprehensive trafficking law (reftel). He hoped that the draft would be ready in time to be presented before parliament in the fall of 2009.

Study on Early Marriage

¶9. (SBU) El Ashmawy told us that NCCM will launch a six-month study in the 6th of October Governorate on "early marriage" in Egypt late April. The study will specifically focus on the problem of "forced or temporary marriage" of young Egyptian girls to older men from the Gulf. The study will also examine ways to implement the Ministry of Justice's "legal regulation" that bans the registration of marriages of Egyptian women to foreigners if the age gap is more than 25 years, which was instituted to eliminate temporary marriages of Gulf men to young Egyptian girls. NCCM also plans to launch a website of forced and temporary marriage and conduct a media campaign to raise awareness of the problem.

Working to Address Child Sex Tourism

¶10. (SBU) El Ashmawy admitted that admitted that the Ministry of Tourism has been slow to engage on TIP issues and NCCM was working with them to get tourism officials to understand the "code of conduct" and get them to work on the problem of child sex tourism.

SCOBAY